



A Note from the Chairman: Hurricane Harvey

First and foremost, our thoughts and prayers are with those in southeast Texas who have been affected by the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey.

We've heard of many instances of registrants and Certified Firms calling in with offers to assist both southeast Texas residents and their fellow colleagues in storm-ravaged areas. This heartwarming display of goodwill speaks to the core of what the IICRC represents, and we're proud of each and every one of you.

For those who have equipment and expertise, and who want to help storm victims, but aren't sure how, consider the following:



Donate. Foremost, consider donating to reputable disaster relief agencies that are experienced and prepared for such disasters and who have programs in place necessary to administer need to people and pets – food, medical services, clothing and shelter are initial priorities.

Subcontract. IICRC-Certified Firms can contact other Certified Firms in disaster-damaged areas. If your firm can spare a vehicle with an IICRC-certified Journeyman or Master Water Restorer, it may be able to serve as a subcontractor with the local firm that has the contacts and resources to provide leads for initial and follow-up services.

Pack up and go. There are many factors to consider when deciding whether to provide restoration services in storm-damaged areas, including:

- Licensing – Restorers should inquire if the state or municipality requires licensing or code compliance for business operation, or for services such as demolition or antimicrobial application.
- Much of the damage is so severe that restoration services simply won't be needed. Demolition and eventually rebuilding with new materials in some cases is the only practical solution.
- Communication, power and municipal services have been disrupted so power and water may not be available. Responders should be prepared with generators and on-board water tanks.
- Likewise, fuel for vehicles and equipment may be sparse, so it's a good idea to transport extra fuel in the bed of a pick-up truck or in an open trailer.



- In many cases, roads into storm-damaged areas will be impassible because of downed trees and power lines, and roads and bridges could be washed out or under water. Where safe and practical, tools may be needed to remove debris.
- Food and water may be difficult to find. Take an initial supply for company personnel and plan for re-supply on a regular basis by someone from outside the area.
- Accommodations will be scarce. Entire communities may have been evacuated to area motels, so unless you have a RV that operates independently without external power, you will likely have trouble finding shelter or administrative office space.
- Employee protection – Responding personnel should have up-to-date immunizations for water-borne diseases such as tetanus and hepatitis. Further, a supply of PPE, particularly disposables, is essential, along with periodic safety briefings.
- Insurance Coordination - Insurance companies may be overwhelmed, and therefore slow to respond with much needed information about policyholders and coverage issues. Moreover, storm victims are often told to do nothing until an insurance company representative arrives – which could be weeks later – causing water damage to increase and microbial growth to amplify.
- Administration – Provisions must be made to coordinate loss administrative and work progress. When processing large or multiple losses, a records clerk normally is needed to provide daily tracking of administrative information on each individual loss, including: work orders, authorizations, job scopes, purchase orders, work progress reports (atmospheric and MC records), completion certificates, payroll, and billing information. Computers and printers usually are required for this important function.
- Finance - Consider how to finance your response. Storm victims may be in dire straits financially, and insurance companies may be inundated with paperwork and slow to respond. According to a recent Washington Post [article](#), a staggering 80% of local homeowners lack flood insurance. Therefore, it may be well to consider [recommendations](#) offered by IICRC Board volunteer experts on dealing with uninsured losses.
- Commitment – Firms should understand that mitigation services will be needed for weeks, perhaps even a month or more. And from a practical standpoint, restorers should consider how the absence of personnel and equipment will affect ongoing company operations at home, as well as the impact of prolonged absence on employee families.
- Post-remediation verification – In some cases, it may be prudent for property owners to hire an indoor environmental professional to verify that their property has been returned to normal ecology – i.e., safe for re-occupancy – before rebuilding takes place.



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- Commercial Losses – Storm damage and flooding that involves large commercial or complex residential buildings require far more expertise, coordination and code compliance than do typical residential structures. For more information on commercial losses, it may be well to consider recommendations offered by IICRC volunteer experts on these losses.

The IICRC staff and leadership are proud to be part of an organization and industry that can have a positive impact on communities affected by natural disasters. The role of Certified Firms in helping people get their lives back following such events is critical. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all, and know that the IICRC stands behind you as you take on this important work.

Thank you for all that you do,

Pete Duncanson
IICRC Chairman of the Board